

## **General Instructions for Application for Membership in the Society of Mayflower Descendants in Delaware**

The purpose of the application form is **to prove beyond a doubt** that you are connected by blood to the ancestor who arrived here on the Mayflower. The descent by blood **must** be proved-- through every generation. **Proof that each ancestor is the child of the preceding generation is absolutely necessary.** This is especially the case where a number of individuals in the same town have the same name. For example, you must be able to prove that your ancestor Thomas Smith was the son of the John Smith who has a proven Mayflower descent.

You may be applying based on a lineage that has been previously approved. Documentation standards for the Mayflower Society changed during the mid-1980's, and most lineages approved before then included little or no documentation. **Accordingly, any documentation not provided for a previously approved lineage must be provided with your application if you intend to have the same lineage approved.**

Unless you know that primary source documentation was provided for an event on a previously approved lineage, you must make every effort to provide documentation for each birth, death and marriage on the lineage. This should be done by "primary proof" or "primary sources." **Primary proof or primary sources consist of legal records-- such as birth, marriage, and death records.** Only if you exhaust all possible primary source records should you rely on secondary source records or on circumstantial evidence. Secondary source records and circumstantial evidence should be used in tandem with each other so that, whenever possible, proof does not rest solely on one document or item of evidence. See the list of primary and secondary source records, circumstantial evidence, and unacceptable references beginning on the next page.

Depending on your age, you should generally be able to locate primary source records for each event (for both the line-carrier and the non-line-carrying spouse) on each of the three to five most recent generations on the lineage (three generations if you are an older applicant; five if you are a younger applicant). If you cannot locate such records, you should explain what steps you took in your search before secondary source records or circumstantial evidence will be accepted. In addition, primary source records for any birth, marriage, or death taking place after 1900, regardless of the generation number of which the event is a part, should be provided.

The only items of proof that you should **not** provide are copies from the Mayflower Families series-- the "Silver Books" for completed works or "Pink Pamphlets" for works in progress. Because both the Historian and the Historian General have copies of these books, and very limited storage space for member files, any photocopies of these books sent to the Historian will be thrown away. Most all of the 23 families from whom Americans have proven descent have 4 or 5 generations proven in either a "Silver Book" or a "Pink Pamphlet." The main exceptions are descents from John Howland, since only the books on the fifth generation descendants through his daughter Desire and his son John have been completed.

Some suggestions on where to look for primary source records both inside and outside of Delaware, as well as copies of the Mayflower Families series, begin on page 3.

Published References: All authorities for published material must be given in full the first time cited, i.e., title, author, place and date of publication, volume number, and page. If cited again, use an identifiable abbreviation of the title, followed by "Op. Cit." to show that the work has been cited before, followed by

volume and page numbers. **A photocopy of the title page** must accompany any pages of a book that are used as proof. Not every piece of published material is acceptable for use. For example, family genealogies or town histories may be questionable. Acceptable published materials are those that are well-documented and that cite their sources.

**You must send two photocopies of each document of proof** to the Historian with your application. **No original documents will be accepted.** All copies of documents of proof become the property of the Mayflower Society and will not be returned to you. Accordingly, make extra copies of your papers and proofs for your future reference and personal use.

The application form you have been sent is only a worksheet, so it does not require a signature. Please make it as clean, clear, and legible as possible, so that the Historian can read it. It should be typed or clearly printed (or, scanned on to and then printed from your computer). It is suggested that you make a copy for your trial efforts.

Write all dates as follows: day, month, year; e.g. 8 Apr 1997. Use three letter abbreviations for each month.

The membership chairperson will coordinate your application process and will check on the status of your application. He will also be able either to offer you assistance or refer you to the Historian, as needed.

Historian: *historian@mayflower-de.org*

Membership Chair: *membership@mayflower-de.org*

### **Acceptable and Unacceptable Documentation:**

#### **Primary Source Records:**

- Vital records of birth, marriage and death (get the long form whenever you have the option)
- Church records of baptism, marriage, and burial
- Bible records that prove relationships (should include the name of the original owner, the name and address of the present owner, and the date and place of the Bible's publication)
- Marriage bonds and licenses
- Deeds
- Probate records, guardianships, or orphan's court records
- Military or pension records
- Cemetery and mortician's records (usually for deaths only)
- Contemporary family letters and diaries (contemporary with the time of the event you are seeking to prove-- not contemporary with the time of application to the society)
- Birth announcements
- Early school records

### **If Primary Source Records Are Not Available:**

#### **Secondary Source Records:**

- County or town histories
- "Mug books" (similar to above; turnof-20th century short biographies in large volumes)
- Family genealogies (published only)
- Federal/state census records showing age and place of birth of the child and in the house of the parents, plus family relationships (Note: If they do not show family relationships, two sequential

census records should be submitted whenever possible and will only be considered circumstantial evidence)

- Newspaper obituaries
- Newspaper marriage or anniversary accounts
- Photos, or photocopies of photos, of gravestone inscriptions (inscriptions must be legible, and you should include an attached paper showing the date the photograph was taken and by whom)
- Affidavits (for example, by adult relatives living at the time of a birth) (dependent on time period)
- Tax rolls or lists (in conjunction with other records)

Circumstantial Evidence does not state any family relationship, but leaves it to be inferred, or pieced together, with other evidence. Examples: census records 1790-1840 (naming only the head of household) or 1850-1870 (naming each person in the household but not stating relationships); family bible records not showing relationships. Again, many of the above items of secondary source records and circumstantial evidence should be used in tandem with each other so that, whenever possible, proof does not rest solely on one document or item of evidence.

Examples of Unacceptable References:

- Index/Indices from Mayflower, DAR, or other lineage societies (including State Society Mayflower Lineage Books)
- Copies of lineage papers that have been submitted to any other lineage societies
- International Genealogical Index (IGI)
- Genealogical compendiums, such as “Virkus”
- Family group sheets and pedigree charts
- Information from family web pages on the Internet, and many other Internet sources
- Who’s Who, Social Registers, or similar works
- Social Security Death Index (SSDI)
- Unpublished handwritten, typescript, or computer-generated genealogical compilations

**Where to Look for Primary Source Records, and Five Generations Project Materials in Delaware:**

Birth, Death or Marriage Records in Delaware:

Office of Vital Statistics  
(302) 995-8588 (Wilmington)  
(302) 744-4559 (Dover)  
(302) 856-5495 (Sussex County)  
<http://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/ss/vitalstats.html>

Birth: 72 years ago to present (see top of next page for older records)  
Marriage: 40 years ago to present (see top of next page for older records)  
Death: 40 years ago to present (see top of next page for older records)

Delaware Public Archives  
121 Duke of York Street  
Dover, DE 19901  
(302) 744-5000  
<http://archives.delaware.gov/collections/vital.shtml>

Birth: 73 years ago and before  
Marriage: 41 years ago and before  
Death: 41 years ago and before

### Deeds and Other Land Records:

New Castle Co. Recorder of Deeds  
Louis L. Redding City County Building  
800 North French Street, 4th Floor  
Wilmington, Delaware 19801-3590  
(302) 395-7700  
<http://www.ncc-deeds.com/recclkshr/default.asp>  
<http://nccde.org/deeds/home/webpage1.asp>

Kent Co. Recorder of Deeds  
Kent County Administration  
Bldg.  
555 Bay Road  
Dover, DE 19901  
(302) 744-2300  
<http://www.co.kent.de.us/Departments/RowOffices/Recorder/>

Sussex Co. Recorder of Deeds  
Lower Level  
2 The Circle  
Georgetown, DE 19947  
(302) 855-7785  
<http://www.sussexcountyde.gov/dept/rod/>

### Probate Records (Wills, Estates, and Administrations):

New Castle Co. Register of Wills  
800 North French Street, 2nd Floor  
Wilmington, DE 19801  
(302)395-7800  
<http://nccde.org/wills/home/webpge1.asp>

Kent Co. Register of Wills  
Kent County Complex  
555 Bay Road  
Dover, DE 19901  
(302) 744-2300  
<http://www.co.kent.de.us/Departments/RowOffices/Wills/>

Sussex Co. Register of Wills  
Court of Chancery Courthouse  
Annex  
5 E. Pine St., P.O. Box 743  
Georgetown, DE 19947  
(302) 855-7875  
<http://www.sussexcountyde.gov/dept/row/>

### Guardianship Records:

New Castle Co. Register in Chancery  
New Castle County Courthouse  
500 North King Street, Suite 1551  
Wilmington, DE 19801  
(302) 255-2213  
<http://courts.delaware.gov/Courts/Court%20of%20Chancery/?personnel.htm>

Kent Co. Register in Chancery  
38 The Green  
Dover, DE 19901  
(302) 736-2240  
<http://courts.delaware.gov/Courts/Court%20of%20Chancery/?personnel.htm>

Sussex Co. Register in Chancery  
Court of Chancery Courthouse  
34 The Circle  
Georgetown, DE 19947  
(302) 856-5777  
<http://courts.delaware.gov/Courts/Court%20of%20Chancery/?personnel.htm>

### Older Court Records in General: (See information for Delaware Public Archives below.)

### Libraries with the 5 Generations Project Books or Other Useful Genealogical Materials:

Historical Society of Delaware  
505 N. Market Street  
Wilmington, DE 19801  
(302) 655-7161  
<http://www.hsd.org/>  
<http://www.lib.udel.edu/>

Delaware Genealogical Society  
(Same address and telephone number as Historical Society of Delaware)  
<http://delgensoc.org/>

Morris Library  
University of Delaware  
181 South College Avenue  
Newark, DE 19717-5267  
(302) 831-2965

Delaware Public Archives  
121 Duke of York Street  
Dover, DE 19901  
(302) 739-3021  
<http://archives.delaware.gov/>

South Coastal Public Library  
43 Kent Avenue  
Bethany Beach, DE 19930  
(302) 539-5231  
<http://www.southcoastal.lib.de.us/>

Dover Public Library  
45 South State Street  
Dover, Delaware 19901  
(302) 736-7030  
<http://www.doverpubliclibrary.org/>

Corbit-Calloway Memorial Library  
P.O. Box 128  
115 High Street (Corner of High & 2nd)  
Odessa, DE 19730  
(302) 378-8838  
<http://www.corbitlibrary.org/>

## Where to Look for Primary Source Records Regarding Events That Took Place Outside Delaware:

### Family History Centers (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints):

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Family History Center 143 Dickinson Lane Wilmington, DE (No mailing inquiries accepted) (Call to check hours before visit) (302) 654-1911	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Family History Center 500 West Chestnut Hill Road Newark, DE (No mailing inquiries accepted) (Call to check hours before visit) (302) 456-9301	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Family History Center Route 10 between Routes 13 & 113A Dover, DE (No mailing inquiries accepted) (Call to check hours before visit) (302) 697-2700
---	--	--

### Other General Research:

Online: [www.cyndislist.com](http://www.cyndislist.com). This is an excellent website that can steer you to contact information for a variety of primary source records all over the country, and the world.

Otherwise: Go to your local public library; look in general reference or in genealogy sections for books such as *The Source* or other works that give you contact information for primary sources (vital records, deeds, wills, etc.) in other states.

### SUMMARY

There are three sets of references that are a must for anyone doing genealogical research of our colonial period. These books are well researched, well documented, and accepted by hereditary societies.

The first set is *Mayflower Families Genealogies Through Five Generations*, better known as the Silver Books. This series traces descendants of the Pilgrims through the fifth generation to the birth of the sixth generation children. Current families covered are: Edward and Samuel Faller; Winslow; Billington; Hopkins; Brown; Priest; Eaton; Doty; Cooke; White; Standish; Chilton; Moore; Alden; Allerton; Warren; Rogers; Samson; Bradford; and Howland. Our society has donated these books to five libraries, and we hope to have complete sets in four libraries by the end of 2009. The Delaware Public Archives will have a partial set, and the Morris Library at the University of Delaware has some volumes. In addition, some libraries have "pink booklets," which are the drafts of future books. The families covered are: Bartlett; Brewster; Church; Cooke; Cushman; Delano; and Soule. See the locations listed above under Libraries with the 5 Generations Project Books.

The Delaware Public Library Catalog is available online, but its listings of the Silver Books are incomplete and inaccurate.

*The Great Migration Project* by Robert Charles Anderson is sponsored by the New England Historic Genealogical Society. The project is a recording of what is known about the first 20 years of immigrants to New England. They are available at the Morris Library.

The last set is *Adventurers of Purse and Person*, edited by John Frederick Dorman and sponsored by the Order of the First Families of Virginia. Although these books cover the first five generations of early Virginia families, the Hopkins and Allerton families are included, plus descendants of many of these Virginia families immigrated to Delaware. Be sure to use the fourth, most recent edition.

Remember! Always use the most recent edition of your resource. Volumes 1 and 2 of the Silver Books are no longer accepted. Information in them has been expanded, corrected, and updated in new volumes.